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FALL 2003



(Publications list continued from the back cover.)

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**Cover:** A 17<sup>th</sup> century copper engraving, after a contemporary portrait, of Jordanus Brunus Nolanus, better known as Giordano Bruno, who was burnt at the stake on February 17, 1600. See "Forum" for the cause of his death.

# THE BIBLICAL ASTRONOMER

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## EDITORIAL

### **The importance of geocentricity today**

If these really are the final days of the church age, and I believe it so, then the age will culminate in an apostasy which excommunicates the Lord Jesus Christ from his church. Thus in Revelation 3:20 he is on the outside, knocking for admission. By extension, all true, Bible believing Christians will be excommunicated with him. Many ignorant of church history think this idea a recent heresy, but the Old Testament books of Esther, Job, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and many of the minor prophets (not to mention the New Testament), relate either directly to this event or its consequences. Indeed, from them it is clear that except for some individual churches, no one will answer the knock. This is evident because a door does open in Rev. 4:1, but it is not the door of the church.

We cannot go into more details here, as we have to relate this to geocentricity.

Jesus is the Word of God, the second person of the Trinity (Rev. 19:13; 1 Jn. 5:7; Jn. 1). He was made flesh (Jn. 1:14) and dwelt in that flesh among man. After his death and resurrection, he left the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:16-17), behind to bear witness of him to believer and unbeliever alike. The Holy Ghost is the third person of the Trinity. He is responsible for inspiring and exposing the scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21), and preserving them, as reflected in Jn. 14:23-24. For the believer, the Holy Ghost will preserve and bring to remembrance the words of the Lord, even the scriptures. The unbeliever he will reprove of sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn. 16:8-11).

The word of God was written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). The verbal expression of the Word is the word. Thus, when Jesus is standing on the outside, knocking on the door of the church to come in, it can only come about by the church's rejection of the testimony of Jesus Christ, that is, the Holy Scriptures.

If this is the last of the church ages, the Laodicean church age (Rev. 3:14-22), then the previous age was the Philadelphian church age (Rev. 3:7-21). That age is characterized by the keeping of the words of God (v. 8). It starts ca. A.D. 1500 with the translation of the Holy Bible into the common tongues of the time. Among the fruit of this is the Bible in the global tongue of the world, English. There is only one unrivalled translation of the time and that is the so-called King James Version. No translation since has been based on the same carefully-compiled and collated originals. No other translation was so widely

used in translating the word into other languages, to start missionary endeavors, and to inspire revivals. Note that not a single national revival has ever come about by a modern version, and none ever can. Solid revivals ended when the churches rejected the Holy Bible for a pile of long-lost manuscripts that no one has ever seen in one place at the same time. The Holy Ghost is not the least bit present in the modern bibles. Nor does he bear witness of them. But the new bibles do appeal to the pride of man: being composed by “good, godly men” of “recognized scholarship,” who teach in “bastions of orthodoxy,” and were taught in “fortresses of fundamentalism.”

But the “righteous men,” who sit on the “translating” committees, work for publishers who must copyright their translations. But a new translation cannot be copyrighted unless it is *significantly different* from all others. So doctrines are compromised and weakened as the copyrightable differences set in. No longer is money *the* root of all evil. And the “good, godly men” do not see that each successive translation has no choice but to wander further and further away from the Truth, who is the Word of God.

Though other nations throughout Europe had translations in their native tongues, only the English were expressly forbidden by the Vatican to have the word of God in their native tongue. Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, and France all had translations available to anyone who could afford them long before Martin Luther nailed his theses on the door at Wittenberg. Even after the Reformation translations, the only one viciously attacked by the Vatican was the *Holy Bible* (the name of King James does not occur anywhere on the title page of the English Bible, even though it was commissioned by King James I of England).

The first attack against the Holy Bible was conducted by Copernicus. Spurred on by his teachers, the head of the Inquisition, and even the Pope of Rome, he published what he knew was a heresy running directly against a clear teaching of Scripture. Creationists may say that Darwin is the main anti-Bible antagonist in the realm of science, but Darwinism would not have seen the light of day if it were not that Christian “scholars,” who valued the world’s “recognition” more than the word of God, first caved in on the issue of geocentricity. Darwin and Marx admitted it. Why do Christians deny it? Why do we fear the scorn of man more than the derision of God? *Remember the sola Scriptura!*

## **GEOCENTRICITY – AN OUTDATED AND DISPROVED THEORY?**

by

**Philip Stott**

In his useful little book “Better Thinking and Reasoning,” Ron Tagliapietra gives a good introduction to how one should approach evidence and draw reasonable conclusions. But he unwittingly gives an even better example of how one can be completely misled by starting with erroneous information to reason about. There are two topics in particular, dear to the hearts of secular humanist scientists, which have been used repeatedly to “refute” the Bible: — topics on which it is difficult to find genuine, unbiased, undistorted information, and unfortunately most Christians have not taken the trouble to search out the truth in either case: — possibly because they have never realised they had been fed red herrings in stead of real meat.

The prime example is, of course, evolution, which was no more than a dubious hypothesis when Darwin popularised it. It has needed to be repeatedly propped up by half-truths, fraud and self-deception (as peddled by Ernst Haeckel, Theilhard de Chardin, Henry Fairfield Osborne and numerous others) to maintain that status. It is being supported today by refusal to face hard facts of well-established science such as the second law of thermodynamics, the principles of informatics and the astounding findings of microbiology. Such difficulties for evolution are brushed over with red herrings. A favourite these days is variation within a kind — dark or light peppered moths, fish with this or that colour gills, change in allele ratios. Variation within a kind has little or nothing to do with evolution in the sense that we are led to think of — the progress of molecules to men. It also has nothing to do with what the Bible tells us — creatures are to reproduce “after their kind” (while nothing is said about how much variation is possible within each kind). Evolution, in the sense that we are supposed to accept, teaches reproduction from one kind to another, which is a process totally unknown to science.

But it is even more difficult to find the truth when it comes to the second favourite topic, the story of the Copernican revolution. It was such an important milestone in the fight against the Bible that few secular humanists are keen to allow the facts to actually emerge, and all is usually so skilfully disguised by half-truths, ridicule and obfuscation that even reasonably serious scholars like Ron Tagliapietra have been kept from even suspecting the reality. We see the first red herring in

the very first sentence of his discussion: — “Copernicus is credited with the heliocentric theory. He proposed that the sun is the centre of the solar system.”

Now the solar system is a recent concept which Copernicus never mentioned (and almost certainly never thought of!). Neither did Galileo, Ptolemy, or any of the other players in the drama. The solar system is irrelevant to the discussion — the Bible makes no mention of the solar system. It is a recent, man-made concept. It can be thought about, but never actually isolated. One can write equations about it, but nothing absolute can be verified about their conclusions. One can make models of it, but they are deficient models, they ignore the vastly more massive, large and gravitationally important remainder of the universe. Biblically it is fatuous to talk about the “solar system” since we know that Jesus is “upholding all things by the word of his power” [Heb 1:3]. To examine the solar system and see how it would work on its own we would have to take that part of creation out of his power. From a purely “scientific” point of view it might well collapse if it could be removed from the surrounding universe. One can, however, convince oneself quite easily that in a mathematical model of the solar system (where the rest of the universe is of necessity ignored completely) the sun would be at its centre and the rest of the system, the earth included, would revolve around it.

Why is the irrelevant solar system sneaked in to the Copernican discussion at all?

Copernicus held that the sun was the centre, not of the solar system, but of the entire universe — so did Galileo and the rest of the protagonists.

Scientists assuredly do not believe that today. To admit that the heroes of the fight against Biblical inerrancy were wrong would not be good for the cause.

The next and equally popular deception passed off upon us comes in Tagliapietra’s next sentence. “The competing geocentric (or Ptolemaic) theory that the earth is the centre of the solar system.” Now not only was Ptolemy concerned with the entire universe (not the solar system), but his system is not, as implied, the one and only model for geocentricity. Several have been proposed, some have never been refuted. It was the geocentric system proposed by Tycho Brahe which was, in fact, the model against which Galileo was called to defend the Copernican. Galileo was unsuccessful, he could not demonstrate any fatal flaw in Brahe’s model, nor superiority in that of Copernicus.

Two further deceptions about Ptolemy’s method are found in the rest of the discussion. Firstly, Copernicus’ model was neither more accurate, nor less complicated than Ptolemy’s. Copernicus had to use considerably more epicycles than Ptolemy. What those who would pull

the wool over our eyes do is to compare an early version of Ptolemy's method of calculation not against that of Copernicus, but against that of Kepler and Newton after improvement by many years of research and refinement. Secondly, Ptolemy and his epicycles are not the primitive and outdated objects of fun the humanists would have us believe. The most convenient means of calculating planetary positions today is still Ptolemy's, though his method has been modernised into "Fourier analysis," and his "epicycles" are now "terms in an infinite series." The most improved versions of Kepler's method are still not superior in accuracy and convenience.

Now most Christians, Ron Tagliapietra included, are side-tracked by the red herring of the solar system (where the earth clearly cannot be stationary at the centre), fail to look any further, assume that the geocentric position is utterly untenable, and search for ways to "excuse" the Bible for its "mistaken" stand and interpret it to say something different. To the Bible-believers of Copernicus's day there was simply no doubt about the Bible's geocentricity. Copernicus said surely it is more reasonable to assume that the earth rotates once each day than that the entire universe rotates around it. Calvin countered with "The heavens revolve daily; immense as is their fabric, and inconceivable the rapidity of their revolutions" [commentary to Psalm 93:1] in deliberate scripture-based contradiction. Luther, speaking of Copernicus's idea said, "Even in these things which are thrown into disorder I believe the Holy Scriptures." Galileo was so confident that the Bible puts the earth stationary at the centre of the universe that to disregard it he had to say, "In matters concerning the natural sciences Holy Writ must occupy the last place."

Why were they so certain of the Bible's stand?

Well for one thing, Genesis 1 tells us that God created the unformed watery waste of the earth on the first day. On day two He separated the waters above from the waters below by an expanse called the "firmament," and on the fourth day He set the sun moon and stars in this firmament. Where is the possibility for the day-one-created earth to be circling around the day-four-created sun? And if one were to accept the Copernican hypothesis, what about the devastation to the vegetation (created on day three) by the tidal waves raised when the earth began its hundred thousand kilometre per hour orbit? Or did the earth accelerate so slowly that no tidal waves were formed? But then what stopped it falling into the sun long before gaining sufficient speed to stay in orbit?

And why should the Bible say "He ... hangeth the earth upon nothing." [Job 26:7] if in fact the earth is not hanging on nothing, but whirling around at a hundred thousand kilometres per hour on the end of a gravitational cord of billions of tons of attraction from the sun?

And again Psalm 19 says of the sun, he “rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it:” Giving the sun a circuit round which to run, not the earth.

And yet again, we see “So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day,” [Joshua 10:13] attributing the long day to the sun stopping its motion, not the earth.

It is fairly clear why the Bible believers of the era saw Copernicus, Galileo, and their heliocentric theory as a challenge to Biblical authority. What is not so clear, until one looks a little deeper, is why today’s supporters of heliocentricity have to resort to red herrings and an avoidance of the truth. Unfortunately for their case many experiments were performed specifically to demonstrate and measure the motion of the earth around the sun. To everyone’s surprise and grief all of them gave the speed of the earth’s movement through space to be a stunning zero. No significant movement could be measured at all. The most famous of the experiments was done by Michelson and Morely. Typical of comments on their results are those of Bernard Jaffe “The data were almost unbelievable. There was only one other possible conclusion to draw, that the earth was at rest. This, of course, was preposterous.”

As “preposterous” as the measurements of Arago, Trouton and Noble, Airy, Thorndyke and Kennedy, Theodore de Coudres and several others. They also found the earth to have a zero velocity through space.

One of South Africa’s most highly respected scientists, world-renowned cosmologist Professor George Ellis, noted “I can construct you a spherically symmetrical universe with Earth at its centre, and you cannot disprove it based on observations.”<sup>1</sup>

Nor can you prove it by observations. As with every Biblical question it is a case of “the just shall live by faith”[Romans 1:17]. To disbelieve the Bible’s geocentric stand takes just as much faith as to accept it — it cannot be disproved by any known observation. The only way to know for certain would be to stand on some fixed point outside the universe and look in. Unfortunately none of us is able to do that. But we may choose to believe the testimony of the One who can.

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Scientific American*, 273(4):29.

## THE BAD ASTRONOMY WEB SITE AND THE GEOCENTRISTS

The following article is a response by Martin Selbrede to a posting by Phil Plait, the moderator of the “Bad Astronomy” web site (<http://www.badastronomy.com>). Creationism and geocentricity are really tough nuts to crack for the atheistic evolutionists that champion the site. Some geocentric participants are more consistent than others, and the inconsistent ones periodically evoke a response from the Forum Moderator, Mr. Phil Plait, himself. Obviously, geocentrists are just plain wrong, period. Mr. Plait has to keep telling them that, for they don’t get the message. So here it is for the “n<sup>th</sup> time,” with a response by Martin Selbrede, a response which will certainly soon be forgotten or, should I say, ignored. Then will come the n<sup>n+1</sup> time. The first two paragraphs are a quotation of the words of the Forum Moderator. The rest are by a competent geocentrist.

The Forum Moderator writes: “As always, besides all the obfuscation, this boils down to the same thing Prince has posted many times before. I have also posted a rebuttal many times, but have never heard back from Prince, Dunash or any other geocentrists on how I am wrong. So, for the n<sup>th</sup> time, I will post it here: Geocentrism, as advocated by creationists or other religiously fundamental people, is certainly wrong. How, you may ask? What is going on is that you can do a change of reference frame to a geocentric one, and by relativity the math must still work out. I readily admit that. I do not understand all the math involved, but I will take it for granted that it works out, and that physically, geocentrism is just as valid as, say, heliocentrism.

“But note the words ‘just as valid.’ Also, by relativity, it cannot be any more valid; geocentrism is just another change of frame (although to a non-inertial one). What geocentrists are saying is that geocentrism is the one, true frame. Creationists must say that because that is what is says in the bible [sic]. Now pay attention here, because this is the important bit: to say geocentrism isn’t wrong, you have to accept the premise that any frame of reference is just as valid as any other. But to claim that geocentrism is correct, you have to ignore that very same premise. Geocentrism as the One True Way is therefore self-contradictory. It doesn’t work.”

The Moderator correctly notes that within the relativity paradigm, geocentricity and heliocentricity are both physically valid models. I've been using plenty of qualifications lately (phrases such as "albeit non-exclusively") to denote this fact of relativity. The general covariance of the field equations requires that all attacks on geocentricity from a physical point of view be regarded as specious. But the ire raised is selectively applied — Occam's Razor has NO bearing on those covariant tensors, and if it did, they wouldn't be covariant anymore. The barycentric argument has no bearing on covariance for the same reason. The superluminal velocity objection to geocentricity is slain on Einstein's field equations. Yet most of this heliocentrically-driven attack on geocentricity is passed over, and anyone asserting that the Earth unequivocally revolves around the Sun is left uncorrected. Their provincialism is acceptable, despite its conflict with relativity theory. A geocentrist dares to point out that these kinds of criticisms have no physical meaning, citing Einstein (correctly!) to that effect, and he's ostracized.

Let it be noted for the  $n^{\text{th}}$  time on the part of geocentrists that our citation of relativity is specific and narrowly focused onto this one axiom: no refutation of the geocentric model, on any physical grounds, can be mounted once one accepts relativity as accurately depicting the physical state of affairs in the universe. Geocentrists do NOT deny that the same could be true of a heliocentric model, or a lunocentric, or jovocentric model. Equal physical validity under relativity accords geocentricity a place at the table, and every critic of it who mounts attacks upon it from a physics perspective is intrinsically crippled in his efforts, unless he elects to jettison Einstein. Then, perhaps, he can attempt to make a case against geocentricity.

I firmly believe that the Moderator makes a gratuitous leap in his concluding syllogism, primarily by incorporating a suppressed premise in his logic. The suppressed premise is that geocentrists are all proponents of relativity theory. And the gratuitous leap is affirming that geocentricity is only salvaged by recourse to relativity, which therefore makes it a non-unique, non-exclusive, albeit legitimate physical description of the physical situation. What, precisely, would the Moderator believe are the implications if relativity is incorrect? Since when is geocentricity harmed by relativity being in error? It appears to geocentrists that relativity being overthrown would lead, not to the outright rejection of geocentricity and re-enthronement of heliocentricity, but quite the opposite.

For example, the Michelson-Morley experiment is explained by relativity by urging that the velocity of the Earth through æther (if one existed) is masked by isotropic light speeds. If relativity is

decommissioned as a viable explanation, the *prima facie* explanation for this experimental result, which is even now a plausible option, becomes nearly compelling: namely, that the M-M apparatus correctly measured the velocity of the earth around the sun, which velocity is zero. (This is why geocentrists have strongly criticized ether entrainment theories that attempt to salvage heliocentricity in non-relativistic thinking. Entrainment is taught because the Earth's motion is presupposed, but each entrainment model is fatally flawed by internal inconsistencies, starting with the disproportion between the allegedly undetectable annual motion and the readily detectible diurnal rotation. Yes, you can say that relativity explains this, but this paragraph is all about what would happen if relativity is debilitated as an explanation.)

I'm aware of no geocentrist who, in the context of relativity theory, derides the equal validity of heliocentricity and geocentricity. But I've read a lot of posts here from geocentricity's critics who are quite clear that they are NOT equal, and that heliocentricity is true while geocentricity is false. They are, rarely, corrected by anyone from their own camp.

In formal debate, one of the most telling strategies is to mount an internal critique of the opposing system. In so doing, you adopt, *ex hypothesi*, your opponent's position and plumb its implications. This, and only this, is what geocentrists do when pointing out that relativity theory bars geocentricity's critics from mounting any attack upon it from the field of physics. We do not urge that relativity teaches geocentricity to be right and heliocentricity to be wrong. We do not misrepresent relativity and its implications. We understand what relativity teaches, and its bearing upon the question in hand. We believe Sir Fred Hoyle struck the correct balance on the matter when he said the trial of Galileo, if held today, would have to be ruled as a draw. Geocentrists make no more of this, so far as relativity is concerned, than is justifiable.

But neither do we leave the matter there. As Franco Selleri's 1998 journal title suggests, there are "Open Questions in Relativistic Physics." And so much of the discussion (the Moderator perceives it as "obfuscation") is centered, not on relativistic explanations, but beyond that paradigm. If geocentricity is to be evaluated, it should be evaluated on its own grounds, not on alien grounds foisted upon it to create straw men opponents. If geocentrists believe geocentricity is what the Moderator calls "The One True Way," this would obviously not follow from relativity, but from a classical reconstruction of physics. Because this fact goes unappreciated, most of the points geocentrists make (about the impedance of free space, the Planck Density, ether

entrainment) are routinely transplanted into a relativistic context by critics. And then we get slammed as if we were using relativity improperly to defend geocentricity as the only legitimate cosmology.

Therefore, the debate has always been prosecuted using a double-edged sword: the internal critique of the opposing system (using the prevailing relativistic paradigm) to disarm all challenges to the geocentric model's validity on physical grounds, and then a positive exposition of geocentricity without reference to relativity, which can be conducted to a compelling conclusion. The former strategy only gets geocentrists so far, but it's a lot farther than most critics are willing to admit (physical equality!). The latter strategy takes geocentricity the rest of the way. This would be easier for many to see if they could be more open-minded on the issue of relativity's actual validity. Yes, there are websites that regard all questioning of Einstein to be forms of psychosis, and some dissident physicists have enunciated positions that later came back to haunt them. What does it say, however, when we choose to psychoanalyze another for his viewpoint, rather than evaluate his view fully on the merits (as a precondition to rejecting or accepting it)? The dissident (crackpot?) is apparently too open-minded, while his opponent may well be too close-minded. This mindset is evidenced by JS Princeton's earlier comments that there is "no motivation" to perform any experiment that might possibly support the geocentric position. This is, and always has been, a serious informal logical fallacy known as "cavalier dismissal." Yes, you stand the risk of standing toe-to-toe with an actual crackpot in unproductive, endless debate. Maybe that's reason enough to perform the experiment — to put a matter to rest. Since geocentrists propose experiments to falsify their view (which stands in the best tradition of the scientific enterprise), I think they're being constructive about this debate.

I find the charge of "obfuscation" curious. There was a high-level discussion in progress, on some relatively obscure (in my view, under-reported) facets of physics that have a major bearing on matters physical. Such discussions are necessarily laden with the appropriate terminology (jargon: the short-hand vocabulary used by specialists in a field). What, specifically, was being cloaked by me in these discussions? Surely not an illicit use of relativity, since much of my discussion involved aspects of a classical reconstruction of physics. Frankly, my opponents' appeals to Occam's Razor was far more an obfuscation (and rejection of their own relativistic paradigm) than anything I said. And, for the record, most people misquote Occam's Razor anyway. The edict not to multiply hypotheses is often thought to mean, "The simplest explanation is the best." In actual fact, it's "The simplest explanation that accounts for all the facts is the best." I'm

simply bringing to bear additional facts not accounted for by geocentricity's opponents. Occam's Razor is thereby vitiated in its application, but geocentricity's opponents don't readjust their bearings before using it. This facile use of a misapplied principle is far more disingenuous than any assertion I've recently made in these discussions.

I trust this sets the record straight. But I've been surprised here before.

So here comes the reaction to the above response by Martin. The reader can clearly see that the author has not understood a word of what was written above. He is like a contentious person who cannot hear the arguments of the other because he is too busy trying to hold his next argument in mind until his turn to speak.

JS Princeton wrote:

What Prinz is saying is a carefully crafted talking out of two sides of his mouth. When it's convenient, he says that relativity doesn't discount a geocentric frame.

But he denies relativity.

Therefore the Bad Astronomer's critique still stands. Geocentrists want to have it both ways but end up shooting themselves in the foot. What's more, the fact that geocentrists contrive all manner of complex constructions to "explain away" noninertial effects of the geocentric frame (in particular, a geocentrists does not believe that Earth is determined by a non-inertial frame), they end up violating Ockham's (sic) razor. Prinz's inability to deal with the fact that interferometers are in space which are effectively carrying out their proposed experiments and that radar signals have been bounced of (sic) Venus and lasers have been shined off the moon shows us how intellectually barren the argumentation is. Let them show us that there is no perceivable (sic) effect for a geocentric model for these observations. All they do is toot their own horn and bring along a Yul who can't seem to evaluate anything scientific at all along for the ride. It's a group of people who are simply "anti-science" and that's all there is to it.

The reader will note two things: first, JS claims Prinz speaks for all geocentrists. If so, I suppose it is fair to claim that my eighth grade teacher, Mrs. Smith, spoke for all evolutionists when she said that the Negroid race was evolutionarily 100,000 years behind the Caucasian race. (Dear NAACP, ACLU, etc., please don't go after Mrs. Smith.

She's been dead two decades and I'm certain she knows better now. As for me, I didn't believe it then, and I don't believe it now, either.)

The second thing the reader will notice is that people who disagree with JS are "simply 'anti-science'." Thus, if you notice that the Michelson-Morley experiment is not conducted by any of the interferometers in space, while the Sagnac effect is, you are anti-science and ignorant beyond all excuse. Strangely, for all that bravado, JS failed to identify which of his examples satisfy which proposed geocentric experiment. Clearly, he either does not know, or he is too lazy to tell us. In other words, he is "playing to the suckers," as a carnie would say.

## READERS' FORUM

### The execution of Giordano Bruno

The following email exchange reveals a little-known cause behind the execution of Giordano Bruno in 1600. It starts with an email from Mr. X, an Aristotelian—a man who believes the teachings of Aristotle about the nature of the universe are the one, true perspective. He does this on the basis that the Roman church held to Aristotelianism until it lost the Copernican Revolution.

At 10:51 PM 8/16/02 -0500, Mr. X wrote:

Thanks, Dr. Bouw, for taking the time to write out your ideas about the Kingdom of Heaven, etc. I wish I could say I'm satisfied, but I'm not. I don't like tricky things, or, at least, not from God, who is supposedly not the author of confusion. Part of the problem in my view is that the original geocentric/heliocentric controversy was about whether the heavens were of ethereal rather than terrestrial substance; Bruno was executed for heresy because of claiming they were terrestrial and that there are many worlds "out there." Galileo's telescope didn't prove heliocentricity, nor, I realize, can that be proved even yet as pseudo-scientists claim, and even if you leave aside that he did find the phases of Venus contradicting Ptolemy's system, there is still the problem that the Church disliked the discovery that the moon and Jupiter weren't ethereal after all. When the heavens were seen as ethereal, then either gods and goddesses or God and angels could dwell there, but we can hardly picture God and angels living on Venus or the moon, or Jesus going to some such place. Even though I realize it isn't entirely serious, I remember one of the early Russian cosmonauts declaring that he had been "up there" and didn't see God. I know it sounds foolish, and I won't even ask you to answer it, but if we have to accept more and more of NASA's space probes and so on, we are actually in my opinion on the same slippery slope that has led downward to that garish travesty of "theistic evolution" - yech! Even if "science" did not win the victory it claims with heliocentricity, I'm afraid it's won more than geocentrists admit. I know you're busy, so I'm not really asking you to answer my quibbles!

--- Gerard Bouw <gbouw@bw.edu> replied:

Although I've read several accounts of Bruno's immolation, it's not entirely clear in my mind why he was executed. I suspect it had

something to do with an implicit rejection of the mass. In any case, the official charge against Bruno was not scriptural but rather because he violated the precepts of Aristotle.

The Scripture does teach that the glory of things celestial is different than of things terrestrial (1 Cor. 15:40). It does not follow that the physics is different, for the second law applies to the entire creation (Rom. 8:22). Thus we have fallen angels (third heaven bodies) and these are associated with stars (Rev. 1:20, second heaven bodies), that are, in turn, associated with messengers to churches (terrestrial bodies). Thus there is no ethereal<sup>2</sup> realm, just a physical realm which spans at least two heavens—if not also the third—and a spiritual realm. It is the spirit that is eternal, not the soul (Eccl. 12:7; Ezek. 18:4, 20), and clearly not the body.

With such a continuity of the second law (the absoluteness of decay in the physical realm), and the spiritual law (absolute standards of morality) throughout at least two of the heavens (atmosphere and space), I fail to find in Scripture any grounds for the “ethereal” you refer to. I can picture spiritual entities occupying stars and planets, and certainly, the morning star is “up for grabs” (Rev. 2:28). Our final authority should be Scripture, the words of God, not traditions such as Aristotelianism, Platonism, or any other philosophy (Col. 2:8).

--- Suzanne R. commented on the exchange:

Thanks for sending me this on Giordano Bruno. He was executed for practicing “black magic.” Via the heliocentric theory of his day, he came to believe he could draw down the power of the sun for his own purpose. The Masons and Cabalistic-Talmudic Jews of the French Revolution saw fit to make him their idol, carrying his bust (see the *Civilta* translation) along with the horns of Satan in street processions. Thus, man is God and can participate in his power through magical works; thus had man to be “freed” by Masonic gnosis, part of which is surely what is behind the mere word “revolution.”

For many years it was unclear as to why Bruno was executed. I should say centuries. However, Frances Yates, the eminent Oxford scholar, finally was invited to the Warburg Institute in London to view original manuscripts on this matter. Thus, after her own long labors looking for the reason, she found it there and wrote the standard work (I believe it is dated in the 1930s), *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, which you can buy anywhere. Her other books are also worth reading for they are keys to the “revolutionary” and magical set

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<sup>2</sup> According to the American Heritage Dictionary, the primary meaning for *ethereal* is: “Characterized by lightness and insubstantiality; intangible.”

that has put in motion the present “culture.” The Warburg Institute, by the way, seems to be a repository for all sorts of rare and key manuscripts. Obviously, they invited her in because it was convenient and desirable for this set to let out some of the truth from their side of the alley.

### **Shakespeare and Psalm 46**

There seems to be no end to the ridicule to which the venerable King James Bible is subjected these days. Every lie in hell’s arsenal has been invoked to destroy the last vestige of the authority of the Philadelphian Church (Rev. 3:7-13), namely, the word of God,<sup>3</sup> and replace it with a Laodicean lukewarm perversion (Rev. 3:16).

One of the gimmicks in hell’s arsenal involves attempts to discredit the way the process of translation that produced the King James Bible. One ruse is to claim that men of no great theological reputation were allowed to spuriously alter the words of the translators or alter the translation according to their own whims. One such case is the claim that Shakespeare was allowed to put his name in Psalm 46. Recently, a reader asked about this and gave this account:

The trick of Psalm 46 is to start at the first verse and count to the 46<sup>th</sup> word where you will find the word “shake.” Next, count from the last verse and count backwards 46 words, then you will find the word “spear.” In order to force the issue, the critic does not count the word “Selah,” which spoils their little scheme in trying to make it look like Shakespeare had a hand in translating the King James Bible. They say that Shakespeare was 46 years old in 1610, and that to honor him the King James Bible translators put his name in the 46<sup>th</sup> Psalm.

The reader, Randy E., wondered how precursors of the King James Bible read in Psalm 46. He asked if I would look them up in Ohio’s translations database, which can only be accessed from within Ohio, particularly, from Ohio educational institutions. I did that and sent him copies of the Psalm in three precursors, the Bishop’s Bible, Matthew’s Bible, and the Geneva Bible. After his analysis, Randy wrote this:

According to the information that you sent me.

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<sup>3</sup> Rev. 3:8 —I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Bishop's Bible uses "shake" in v. 3, and "spear" in v. 9;  
Matthew's Bible uses "shoke" in v. 3, and "spear" in v. 9;  
Geneva Bible uses "shake" in v. 3, and "spear" in v. 9.

The Matthews Bible (1537) reads the same as the Coverdale of 1535. I also checked the Great Bible and it, too, reads "shake" in verse 3 and "speare" in verse 9. So, unless Shakespeare (born 1564) inserted his name into the Great (1539), Bishop's (1568) and Geneva (1560) bibles, too, the charge that Shakespeare was allowed to tamper with the translation process of the King James committee must be laid to rest along with the lies that King James was a sodomite, that King James dictated what words were to be used in the translation, and that the translators did not believe that the hand of God was upon their work to prosper it.

### **On dark matter**

On May 3, a reader asked:

Is this "missing dark matter" basically synonymous with the Firmament? Is there something really "missing," and how is it explained in our 6,000-year-old geo cosmology?

It is possible that dark matter is some type of higher-order effect due to the firmament, but I doubt it. I have long suspected that the law of gravity is not what it cracks up to be. It turns out that the bigger the object, the more mass it's missing. Thus in a galaxy between 40-90% of the mass might be missing. For a cluster of galaxies, it ranges from 90% to 99.9%.

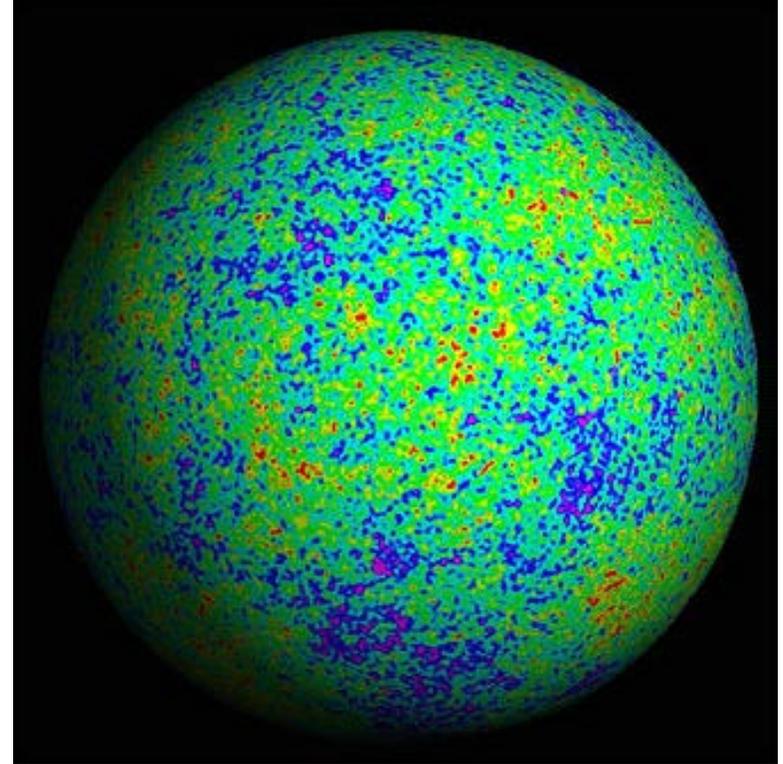
At large scales, quantum behavior should be important again. In quantum mechanics, the mass of a particle varies inversely to its size. That is, the smaller the mass, the bigger it is. That's why an electron "surrounds" the more massive nucleus.

This would show up in the gravitational "constant," which has units of  $1/(\text{density sec}^2)$ . So, as the density decreases, we expect the value of G to increase. Holding G constant means that the mass must increase, instead, in the classical (Newtonian) gravity equation. Hence we have the missing mass may be missing physics, instead.

## PANORAMA

### Preferred directions in the universe?

The best map yet of the Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB) Radiation—the so-called echo of the Big Bang—shows the Universe may not be the same in all directions. The image has been produced



from data collected by the Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (Map), which was launched in 2001. “It is a photo of the most distant thing we can see; our best photo yet,” said Dr. Max Tegmark, of the University of Pennsylvania, who processed the image. Dr. Tegmark and colleagues present the CMB as a sphere: “The entire observable Universe is inside this sphere, with us at the center of it.” In so doing, the team find something unexpected and so far unexplained in the symmetry of the CMB.

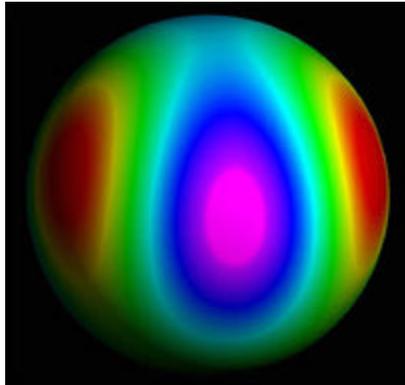
In producing the image, Tegmark removed all sources of contaminating foreground radiation leaving only the cosmic

background itself. The goal was to measure the temperature differences correspond to “seeds” that allegedly grew to become stars and galaxies. There were many sources of radiation that could “pollute” the CMB. Dust in our galaxy radiates microwaves and electrons moving through magnetic fields give off this radiation as well. These effects have to be removed if the CMB is to be studied properly. Tegmark thinks that the radiation that was detected as the CMB comes from a time when the Universe was less than half a million years old; from the so-called recombination era when hydrogen atoms formed in the cooling, expanding fireball of the Big Bang. It was a time when the stars and galaxies had yet to form. There was only gas. It is expected that the relic radiation from these clouds is almost isotropic - the same in all directions.

Now the theories for the origin of stars, solar systems, planets, and galaxies have failed miserably when it comes to the mathematics. So, for decades, astronomers have placed the “seeds” for their formation into the “flow” of the Big Bang. These seeds would show up as irregularities in the CMB, but the instrumentation did not exist to observe them at a high enough sensitivity. The expected variations in the CMB’s intensity turned out to be so hard to detect that it was only in 1992 that they were first seen —variations of about a few parts per million on scales of the same angular diameter as the apparent diameter of the Moon. The variations in the CMB are expected to contain information about the formation of the galaxies, the composition of the universe and its fate.

Having produced the cleanest map of the CMB yet, Dr Tegmark displayed it in an unusual manner. Instead of a flat projection on a computer screen, he showed the data as ripples on a sphere (picture below)— “after all the CMB comes from a sphere,” he says. “Space continues outside the sphere but this opaque glowing wall of hydrogen plasma hides it from our view.

If we could only see another 380,000 light-years we would be able to see the beginning of the universe,” he told BBC News Online. “We found something very bizarre; there is some extra, so far unexplained structure in the CMB. We had expected that the microwave background would be truly isotropic, with no preferred direction in space



but that may not be the case.” Looking at the symmetry of the CMB—measures technically called its octopole and quadrupole components—the researchers uncovered a curious pattern. They had expected to see no pattern at all but what they saw was anything but random. “The octopole and quadrupole components are arranged in a straight line across the sky, along a kind of cosmic equator. That’s weird. We don’t think this is due to foreground contamination,” Dr. Tegmark said. “It could be telling us something about the shape of space on the largest scales. We did not expect this and we cannot yet explain it.” It may mean that the CMB is clumpier in some directions than others. It can also mean that the universe rotates within a larger medium or space such as the firmament. Some theories of the structure of the universe predict this, but observational evidence to support it would be a major discovery. Such a rotation was predicted in 1988 by Dr. Bouw.<sup>4</sup>

### **Binary asteroids not uncommon**

As of a year ago, the number of known asteroid pairs stood at 31. At the end of last October, the latest asteroid satellite orbits a known asteroid, 121 Hermione, which is an irregularly shaped giant boulder with an average diameter of about 130 miles (209 kilometers). Hermione and its smaller companion travel around the Sun in the outer portion of the main Asteroid Belt between Mars and Jupiter.

The asteroid’s moon is estimated to be eight miles (13 kilometers) in diameter. The size is uncertain because in examining such relatively small bodies so far away, astronomers can’t be sure how much light the rocks reflect and whether they were viewed broadside or possibly showing a narrower profile, two key factors in determining size. The satellite is thought to orbit the Hermione every 3 or 4 days at about 620 to 930 miles out (1,000 to 1,500 kilometers).

Asteroid pairs were unknown until 1993, when the Galileo spacecraft spotted the asteroid Dactyl orbiting asteroid Ida. William Merline of the Southwest Research Institute and his colleagues reported the second known moonlet in 1999, circling asteroid Eugenia.

Merline said the growing number of known asteroid pairs over the past three years and the diversity of configurations—object of roughly equal size circling each other, as well as tiny moonlets orbiting large rocks—means that evolution will need more than one formation mechanism to explain them all.

The new pair is the ninth known to populate the main Asteroid Belt. Some 14 pairs inhabit space closer to earth and are classified as Near Earth Objects (NEOs)—things that merit watching to make sure

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<sup>4</sup> Bouw, G. D., 1988. “Response to Byl,” *Bulletin of the Tychonian Society*, No. 47, p. 11.

they're not on a collision course with earth. Seven asteroid pairs have been found beyond the orbit of Neptune, in the realm of the Trans-Neptunian Objects (TNOs); these are sometimes called Kuiper Belt Objects. Finally, one pair is part of a special class of Trojan asteroids locked into orbits ahead of or behind Jupiter.

Based on these numbers, some estimates can be made about the percentages of asteroids that might actually occur in pairs. Overall, there are thought to be roughly 1,000 to 1,200 large NEOs (1 kilometer or bigger) and hundreds of thousands of smaller ones. Some 16 percent of NEOs might be binary systems. (For comparison, about two-thirds of stars occur in pairs or multiples.) About 2 percent of asteroids in the main belt might have companions. There are millions of asteroids out there. More than one percent of Trans-Neptunian Objects are thought to be binaries, but this number will likely climb as observation tools and techniques improve for the outskirts of the solar system.

Why do a greater percentage of asteroids roaming near Earth seem to have orbital partners? "We believe that the NEOs are formed by a distinctly different mechanism than the main-belt binaries," Merline said. "And this is more than likely the reason that different populations show different frequencies of binaries."

In essence, it seems that the asteroidal bodies in the solar system cannot be explained evolutionarily by a single phenomenon such as leftover remnants of the nebula that formed the solar system. As a rule, anything having to do with earth seems to require special theories or considerations relative to other bodies in the solar system. This echoes the geocentric notion that the earth is a special place in creation.

### **Meteor crater discovered in Iraq**

In recent years, archaeologists have turned back to the Bible in a way they now feel safe to do. They now openly admit that "apocalyptic visions, ancient art and scientific data that all seem to intersect at around 2350 B.C., when one or more catastrophic events wiped out several advanced societies in Europe, Asia and Africa." According to the Bible, there were two major catastrophic events at the time, the Flood in A.M. 1656 (about 2344 B.C.) and the division of the earth in Peleg's day, between A.M. 1757-1996 (2243-2004 B.C.).

But it is not the biblical accounts that intrigue the archaeologists and some scientists; it is that they suspect comets and their associated meteor storms as the cause. For them, historical accounts are not factual accounts of what happened but instead are thought to provide "clues" to what "really happened" but was embellished in myth and superstition. For them, the ancient accounts form mere icons and

myths surrounding the cataclysms, and these persist in cults and religions and even spawn terrorism. They a smoking gun in the newly found 2-mile-wide crater in Iraq.

The crater's discovery was announced in a recent issue of the journal *Meteoritics & Planetary Science*. It was found accidentally by Sharad Master, a geologist at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, while studying satellite images. The finding was not presented in a full-fledged scientific paper, and was not subject to peer review. Scientist in several fields were excited by the possibility, but they expressed caution about interpreting the preliminary analysis and said a full scientific expedition to the site needs to be mounted to determine if the landforms do in fact represent an impact crater. In other words, no one would take responsibility to review a paper spanning such a wide range of disciplines with ramifications in some of the world's strongest and most violent religions.

To confirm the find, researchers would look for shards of melted sand and telltale quartz that had been shocked into existence. If it proves to be an impact crater, there is a good chance it was dug from the planet less than 6,000 years ago, Master said, because shifting sediment in the region would have buried anything older. However, arriving at an exact date will be difficult, researchers said.

Even so, the crater has already been implicated in "several plot lines converging in conspicuous ways." These include not only the events of the deluge and Peleg's continental split, but also the tower of Babel and the power struggles of the "gods," early rulers of men such as Nimrod to whom their descendents attributed divine properties. As far as the crater is concerned, it faces the blame for the first sophisticated civilizations to disappear, the ruin of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, the decline of the Accad culture of Iraq, the famines due to drought in Mesopotamia, earth's original breadbasket. The crater is also suspected for producing the apocalyptic writings, fueling religious beliefs that persist today, such as *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Omens predicting the collapse of Accad, which was founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:10), report that "many stars were falling from the sky." The *Curse of Accad*, dated to about 2200 B.C., speaks of "flaming potsherds raining from the sky." Roughly 2000 years later, the Jewish astronomer Rabbi bar Nachmani apparently worked from the Accad record and concocted the story that Noah's Flood was triggered by two "stars" that fell from the sky. He claimed that when God decided to bring about the Flood, he took two stars from the Pleiades, and threw them on earth, bringing about the Flood."

All coincidence? A number of scientists don't think so. Mounting hard evidence collected from tree rings, soil layers and even

dust that long ago settled to the ocean floor indicates there were widespread environmental nightmares in the Near East during the time of the so-called "Early Bronze Age." Abrupt cooling of the climate, sudden floods and surges from the seas, huge earthquakes, these all relate to Peleg's division and the aftermath of the Flood, including the ice ages that existed from about the end of the flood for the next five hundred years or less.

The secularists chain one or two comet impacts together into a sequence of disasters that will be accommodated by evolutionary time scales. For instance, they will not allow such impacts to be the cause of the ice ages unless these are in remote "times." Yet there do seem to be impacts associated with the creation of the earth, certainly, but also with the Flood and also with the continental splits. Indeed, the splits may be the result of volcanism induced by impacts one or two hundred years after the end of the Flood.

To show how scattered the events associated with the Iraqi crater are, Bill Napier, an astronomer at the Armagh Observatory in Ireland, thinks comet Encke, discovered in 1786, is the remnant of a larger comet that broke apart roughly 5,000 years ago, (his age). He imagines large chunks and vast clouds of smaller debris lighting up the skies for years by a fireworks-like display of comet fragments and dust vaporizing upon impact with earth's atmosphere. This would be associated with the fall of Accad ca. 2200 B.C. But Napier has also tied the possible event to a cooling of the climate, measured in tree rings that he dates from 2354-2345 B.C. Correcting the C-14 dates of the wood on which the age is based for the decay of the earth's magnetic field, gives us a date of 1640 B.C., some 700 years after the flood and four hundred years after the fall of Accad.

Benny Peiser, a social anthropologist at Liverpool John Moores University in England, said roughly a dozen craters are believed to have fallen in the past 10,000 years.<sup>5</sup> Dating them precisely is nearly impossible with current technology. Likewise, if any of those craters can be tied back to a single comet is still impossible to determine.

"There is no scientific reason to doubt that the break-up of a giant comet might result in a shower of cosmic debris," Peiser said.

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<sup>5</sup> Correcting this for C-14's dependence on the strength of the earth's magnetic field gives an age of about 4150 years or dating from ca. 2150 B.C.

## CREDO

The Biblical Astronomer was founded in 1971 as the Tychonian Society. It is based on the premise that the only absolutely trustworthy information about the origin and purpose of all that exists and happens is given by God, our Creator and Redeemer, in his infallible, preserved word, the Holy Bible commonly called the King James Bible. All scientific endeavor which does not accept this revelation from on high without any reservations, literary, philosophical or whatever, we reject as already condemned in its unfounded first assumptions.

We believe that the creation was completed in six twenty-four hour days and that the world is not older than about six thousand years. We maintain that the Bible teaches us of an earth that neither rotates daily nor revolves yearly about the sun; that it is at rest with respect to the throne of him who called it into existence; and that hence it is absolutely at rest in the universe.

We affirm that no man is righteous and so all are in need of salvation, which is the free gift of God, given by the grace of God, and not to be obtained through any merit or works of our own. We affirm that salvation is available only through faith in the shed blood and finished work of our risen LORD and saviour, Jesus Christ.

Lastly, the reason why we deem a return to a geocentric astronomy a first apologetic necessity is that its rejection at the beginning of our Modern Age constitutes one very important, if not the most important, cause of the historical development of Bible criticism, now resulting in an increasingly anti-Christian world in which atheistic existentialism preaches a life that is really meaningless.

**If you agree with the above, please consider becoming a member. Membership dues are \$20 per year. Members receive a 15% discount on all items offered for sale by the *Biblical Astronomer*.**

*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

– Isaiah 8:20

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